BRITISH COLUMBIA
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Education Report

Province Provides $4M for Playgrounds

The Province recently provided $4 million to improve school playgrounds around British Columbia. This playground funding supports ActNow BC, encouraging children to be more physically active. "Make every move a good move." Read more. For more information on ActNow BC, visit www.actnowbc.gov.bc.ca.

Minister Bond takes a turn on the swings with help from a student at Vancouver's Lord Roberts elementary.

Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Minister Shirley Bond

Did you know that nearly one out of four children is not developmentally ready to start school? It's true. It's also unacceptable.

That's why in December we introduced StrongStart BC centres, where qualified early childhood educators lead a drop-in program that includes pre-literacy learning activities like stories, music and art. The activities help children grow linguistically, physically and socially, and become comfortable in a school-like environment.

Now, the Province is providing a total of $5 million to expand StrongStart BC by adding centres throughout B.C. In fact, almost every district plans to open centres.

StrongStart BC centres complement recently introduced legislation that expands the role of school boards – now boards of education – to include early learning and community literacy. I want to thank the many trustees, superintendents, educators, young families and others who are making StrongStart BC a success.

StrongStart BC is a big part of this government's literacy plan, called ReadNow BC. ReadNow BC will help ensure all British Columbians have the reading skills necessary to understand and use printed information at home, at work or in the community. Read more.

HOT TOPIC

Later this month, students across B.C. will write provincial exams. To help students prepare for the exams B.C.'s virtual school, LearnNow BC, is providing free tutoring.

This online service is available to all B.C. students taking Essentials of Math 10, Principles of Math 10, Science 10, Social Studies 11, and now seven Grade 12 courses have been added: biology, chemistry, geography, geology, history, physics and Principles of Math.

Students can access course content, sample tests and tutoring by visiting LearnNow BC at www.learnnowbc.gov.bc.ca on the Internet.

Accredited teachers and peer tutors are available via a chat room Sundays through Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. with extended hours prior to provincial exams.

Workshops with accredited teachers are featured nightly at 7:30 p.m., with logins available as of 7:15 p.m. Workshops are followed by an online group discussion, including a question-and-answer period on the session.

Other tools are available 24 hours a day, including StudyBUZZ, which allows students to test themselves and assess which areas of study require more review and practice.

Government is working to improve student achievement by listening to students and giving them the tools they need – tools that complement the way they learn.

In fact, LearnNow BC is being streamlined to make it more attractive and easy to navigate. The new website design will include a search engine so students can choose tutoring services by subject area or grade level.

Direct students to www.learnnowbc.gov.bc.ca. Read more.

Eragon
Christopher Paolini

Reading Corner

Imagine picking up a polished stone – a pleasing blue. You take it home. But what do you do when the so-called stone hatches a dragon? Eragon, this book's young protagonist, learns the legend of the Dragon Riders and battles an evil king. Author Christopher Paolini started writing this first book of the Inheritance Trilogy at age fifteen; it was originally self published with the help of his parents. The novel is suitable for students in grades 6–10.